

Yaguais the Big Factor in Mexican Situation

BY CHARLES M. PEPPER.

THE Yaguai Indian problem in Mexico is taking on some of the aspects of an American problem. It is one of the many factors that have to be considered in the complicated Mexican situation. The Yaguais are the best fighters south of the Rio Grande. Sonora owes much to them. So does the constitutional cause.

The Yaguais need to be sharply distinguished from the Indian peons who form the mass of the Mexican population. They have kept to their own section on the Pacific slope of the Sierra Madre for centuries. There is very little intermixture of

with them. Nevertheless, if Gen. Diaz had been able to enter into a struggle with the big Mexican land owners to divide the lands, the Yaguais would have felt some assurance that they were not to be despoiled and they would have been on his side.

Gen. Diaz never was strong enough to begin this contest and in consequence the Yaguais were arrayed against him, sometimes in sullen submission, sometimes in active revolt. They stood in the way of all the plans for developing Sonora and the adjoining country by means of railways and other public improvements.

It was claimed, therefore, that the only hope of Sonora was in the deportation of the Yaguais. In the eyes of military commanders thought that the only thing was extermination, and they gave their orders accordingly. Gen. Huerta was one of this

Problem Takes On Aspects of the American One—Yaguais Are Best Fighters South of Rio Grande, and They Are Distinguished From the Indian Peons Who Form the Mass of Mexican Population—Have Kept Their Own Section of the Pacific Slope of the Sierra Madres for Centuries—Farmers Who Depend Almost Entirely on Primitive Methods—Indian Policy of Gen. Diaz—Revolts Against the Dictators—Cruelties Against the Indians—The Yaguais and the United States.

One of the officials further explained that some of them would soon be brought back and returned to their lands, as they had been good Indians on the Yecatero plantations, but this was done it was an exceptional instance. Few of the exiled Yaguais were allowed to return, but they were always enough left to keep up the guerrilla warfare with the troops, and the reprisals on both sides, in their savagery, were almost equal to the atrocities charged by the Christian powers of Europe to one another in the present war.

It was a certainty that any revolutionary leader who could make a stand against Diaz would rally the support of the Yaguais, although they were little concerned about conditions in other parts of Mexico. When Gen. Carranza crossed the Sierra Madres with his small following and began his campaign against Huerta he was sure of the support of the Yaguais.

Gov. Maytorena, who had been counted in by the Maderistas in the election held under the Madero "constitutional government," in refusing to accept the authority of Huerta, felt that the Yaguais would stand by him, for they knew Huerta. So Sonora almost from the beginning was in the possession of the revolutionists.

In the neighboring state of Sinaloa the Huertistas were able to maintain themselves for a while. It was the Yaguais who enabled Gen. Carranza to take Culiacan, the capital of that state. Subsequently they were in most of the so-called battles until Sonora and Sinaloa were cleared of the federal troops. The revolutionary conditions and the overthrow of the Madero regime enabled many of the Yaguais who had been exiled to Yucatan and Tehuantepec to return. These Yaguais undoubtedly have a better idea of Mexico as something more than Sonora, than have their fellow-tribesmen in the Yaguai valley.

Some of the Yaguais also formed part of the revolutionary troops who crossed the Sierra Madres and took part in the campaign following Villa's victory at Torreon. I saw a number of them at Durango, and they were without exception fine looking men, much more intelligent than the ordinary peon soldiers from Chihuahua and Durango.

Yet the large majority of the Yaguais know only Sonora and some parts of Sinaloa. Their knowledge of government are therefore likely to be somewhat circumscribed in the geographical sense.

It is the testimony of those who were on the Pacific slope during the period of real fighting that the Yaguais are superior to the ordinary Mexican peons in their initiative capacity. They have much of the self-reliance of the North American Indian. It is also the testimony of those who have been in a position to observe, that the Yaguais were much less given to pillaging and worse things than were the bulk of the revolutionary troops. But they were far from angels.

The nominal alignment of the Yaguais as Villistas has no significance. Villa in his hand days, when roaming over northern Sonora, had nothing to do with the Yaguais. They had never heard of him. It was only after the fall of Carranza that they were connected with the revolution. It merely has happened that since Gov. Maytorena found it convenient to purchase by the revolutionaries the Carranzistas would not trust him, the Yaguais who supported him in previous fights have been with him. Their allegiance is very shadowy.

Whenever Gen. Obregon returns to Sonora to take control of the situation in person, in all probability, he can count on winning over most of his old Yaguai followers. Gen. Obregon himself is of Yaguai blood, and is proud of it.

The United States comes into the Yaguai situation in various ways. If there be armed intervention it will be highly desirable to make the Yaguais understand that the armed forces are not there as were the Spaniards, and later the Mexicans, to conquer them.

They would be harder to conquer than were the Apaches, whom they resemble in some respects. They are just as good fighters and are accustomed to mountain fighting. They are also well supplied with modern arms,

signs that in the future they are not to be treated as pests and nuisances. So there will be a question of reconciling the American and the Yaguai interests.

When E. H. Harrington carried forward C. E. Huntington's plans of railway extension through Sonora and farther on, a tempting inducement was held out for the investment of American capital in lands. The lands are very rich, especially in the Yaguai valley, but they require irrigation. Very large sums were spent by two or three groups of American capitalists, and some progress had been made on the big irrigation projects when the Madero revolution broke out. In the meantime there were numerous American settlers on ranches and on small tracts. These settlers have suffered like all other Americans in Mexico. Many of them who were driven out did not attempt to return, but others

after the usual frontier method, but this view is not commonly held by Americans at the head of large enterprises who have employed the Yaguais almost uniformly speak well of them. It is to be noted, too, that the Yaguais are not all farmers. Many of them are good artisans, and many work in the mines. Some are employed on the railways.

Several years ago, going down from Nogales to Guaymas, the train on which I was traveling struck a bridge that had been washed out by the flood. The engineer stuck to his post and by his quickness to make a detour only the engine and tender and baggage car went down the embankment. The passenger coach being halfway over the river. The engineer crawled out of the wreck, and, notwithstanding severe injuries, began a search for members of the train crew who might have been pinned under the wreckage. He was successful. Satisfied with his assistance as the passengers could give and awaited medical aid.

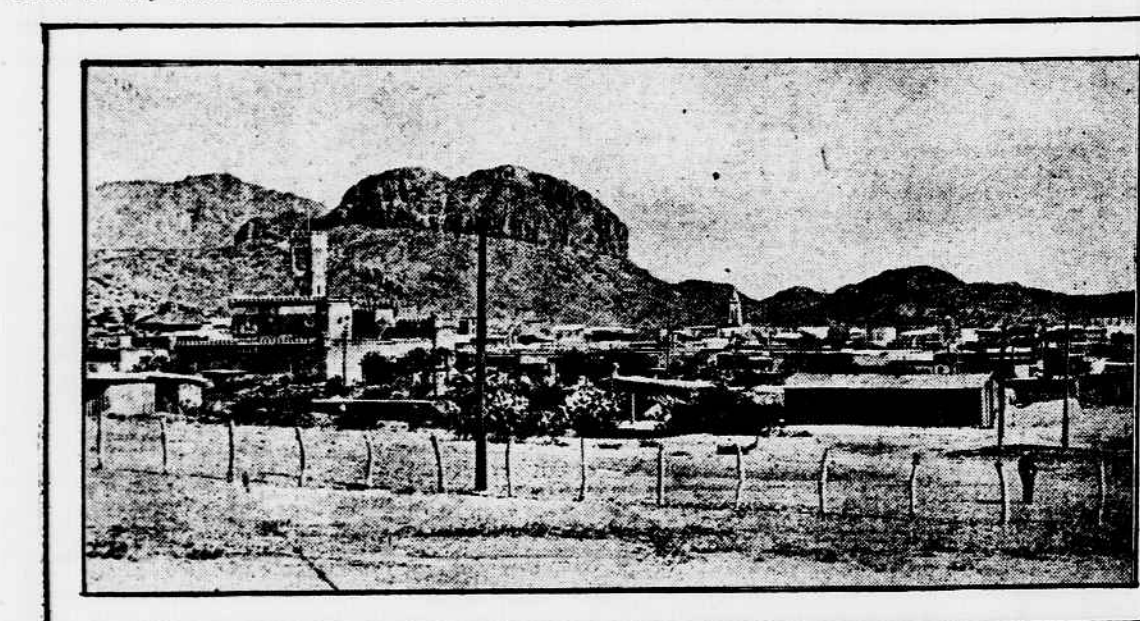
An official of the road happened to be on the wrecked train. I made some comment according to legal forms. He said to me, "He's a Yaguai." "He's not a Mexican," said the official, sharply. "He's a Yaguai." The fundamental fact which the United States must keep in mind, whether under armed intervention or under whatever may come out of the existing conditions, is that notwithstanding American settlers, the Yaguais regard themselves as the aboriginal and the original land owners in the Yaguai valley. They fought the Diaz government, and they fought previous governments, because they did not propose to be driven off their own lands, even though the title was vested in some one else.

The strong tendency to state socialism which has been manifested in Sonora is partly due to this feeling that the land belongs to the people in common, although it may be apportioned according to legal forms.

In handling the Yaguais it also will be necessary to keep in mind that, even aside from the land question, they do not take kindly to too much authority in the shape of any kind of government. They are emphatic believers in the maxim of the west government is that which governs least, although they never heard that hackneyed phrase.

They may be reconciled to a central government in Mexico City if it lets them alone or they may be reconciled to the authority of the United States if its manifestations are not too pronounced in the way of restricting their activities. It is essential to whatever authority ultimately is established that the Yaguais be reconciled to it.

Most of the Americans in Sonora have been able to get along very well with the Yaguais during normal times. A few are of the type who insist that the only good Yaguai is a dead one.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF GUAYMAS.

Spanish or other foreign blood in them. They still typify the best qualities of the Indian races as they existed in Mexico before the conquest by Cortez.

The Yaguais differ from the bulk of the other Mexican Indians in that they never have been civilized by a "superior race." This means that they never have been fully conquered and crushed either under the Spanish dominion or during the regimes of the different Mexican dictators.

Considered as uncivilized Indians, the Yaguais have made a pretty good showing for themselves. They are aboriginal farmers who have not depended entirely on primitive methods of agriculture. In that respect they have shown more progressiveness than the Indian peons of other parts of Mexico.

In their willingness to work the Yaguais differ from many of the western tribes of the United States who were crowded out by the incoming of white settlers. They are less nomadic than most of the aboriginal American Indians, yet they could not be said to form a settled population.

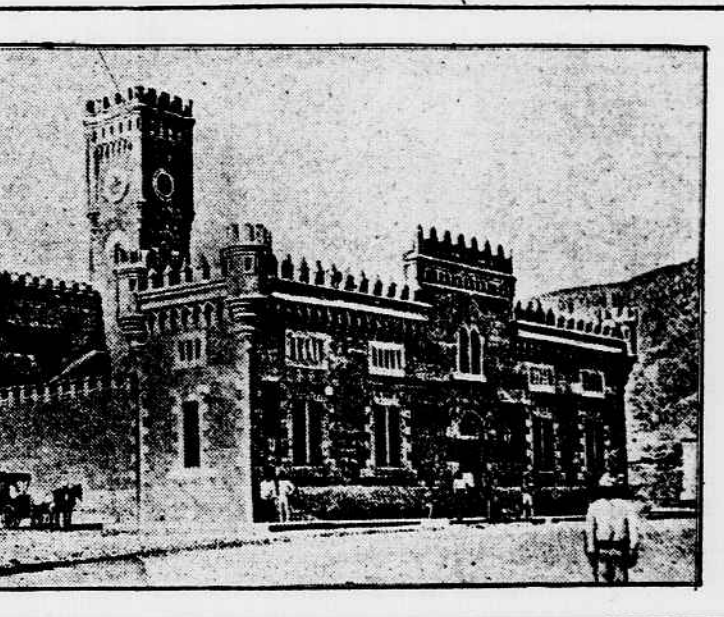
This was one thing that brought them into conflict with the Spaniards and later with the Mexican authorities as personated in troops. While not retaining entirely their tribal habits, they were a bar to the plans which looked to opening up the whole of Sonora, and making it a white man's country, with the white men enjoying the usufruct.

The Indian policy of Gen. Diaz in reference to the Yaguais was neither more nor less than the policy which the United States pursued for half a century. It was not meant to be a cruel policy, and there are two sides to that chapter of the Diaz regime. The Yaguais resented civilian authority in the way of control, and their resentment usually took the form of fighting every effort to impose authority on them.

Revolts against Diaz and the dictators who preceded him were merely a continuation of the revolts against Spanish power. The Yaguais always felt that civilization, as it was represented in the form of authority, meant taking their lands away from them, and they



GROUP OF YAGUI INDIANS AS SOLDIERS.



THE PRISON AT GUAYMAS, WHERE YAGUIS WERE HELD.

which they know how to use. Fortunately the Yaguais have no feeling of hostility to the United States. They do not seem to share the feeling of the peons on the other side of the Sierra Madre that we mean to take something from them.

Less than a year ago, when one of the American warships was off Guaymas, it was reported that several hundred Yaguais who were tired of the factional fights wanted to enlist as soldiers of the United States.

The present problem also has to be considered in the light of the Americans and the American interests in Sonora. While heretofore Americans have had little consideration, there are

have gone back, and there are a few who succeed in remaining during the worst period.

There have been some raids by the Yaguais on these American properties and there have been some murders. But, all things considered, the Yaguais have not much to be laid at their doors. They appear to have discriminated between Americans and Mexicans.

Most of the Americans in Sonora have been able to get along very well with the Yaguais during normal times. A few are of the type who insist that the only good Yaguai is a dead one.



SETTLER'S HOMESTEAD IN RIVER REGION.

How Patriotic and Historical Organizations Are Teaching Patriotism

FROM the establishment of the republic down to 1876, the centennial year, we Americans really did not know what our history was. That year marked an awakening. Since then much progress has been made, but even now we are not thoroughly awake. Through various organizations much has been done in the way of the preservation of material of historic value which, nevertheless, almost daily priceless documents and records are being destroyed, making more difficult the task of reconstructing true American history.

It is A. Howard Clark speaking. The greater part of his life has been devoted to the study of American history. He is the man through whom articulate the various organizations which are seeking to preserve the sources of American history. His office in the original building of the Smithsonian Institution practically is the repository of American historical knowledge.

Here one goes for material to explode so many of the fictions which have incumbered American history. Here one may learn the facts which indicate that the Betsy Ross flag story is a myth, that the Declaration of Independence was not signed by members of the Continental Congress the Fourth of July, that the Stars and Stripes were not, save in isolated instances, carried by the American armies in the field in the war of independence, that the Liberty bell tradition is fanciful. Oh, it is a delightful place for the iconoclast, in this office, and yet the spirit of the place is far from iconoclastic. Rather it is truly patriotic, uplifting and deeply studious. For, avoiding all effort to destroy beautiful stories, this is the place where truth in its purity is insistently demanded.

One comes from talk with Mr. Clark with a new and broader vision of American history in its relation to patriotism, for the lesson here learned is that the higher patriotism is based on knowledge of the history of this republic and its institutions.

Among the organizations that are devoted to preserving American history are the National Museum, a part of the Smithsonian Institution, and supported by the government; the American Historical Association, a semi-scientific body of historians which has connection with the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Since 1883, which year marked the beginning of the historical collection of the National Museum, Mr. Clark has been the curator of that collection and editor of the publications of the Smithsonian.

For twenty-five years he edited, in addition, the publications of the American Historical Association, of which organization, from 1889 to 1898, he was secretary and is still the curator. For many years he has been secretary general and registrar of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Could any man be closer to American history with historical research in America?

But, in addition to all this, Mr. Clark

Accurate Knowledge of the Story of This Republic and the Men and Women Who Made It Held to Be Essential to a Real Love of Country—A. Howard Clark, Curator of the Historical Collection in the National Museum and Secretary and Registrar General of the Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Tells of the Activity of Those Organizations in the Direction of Making Better Citizens—Helping the Naturalized Alien to Understand the Nation's Institutions—The Real Lesson of the Fourth of July.

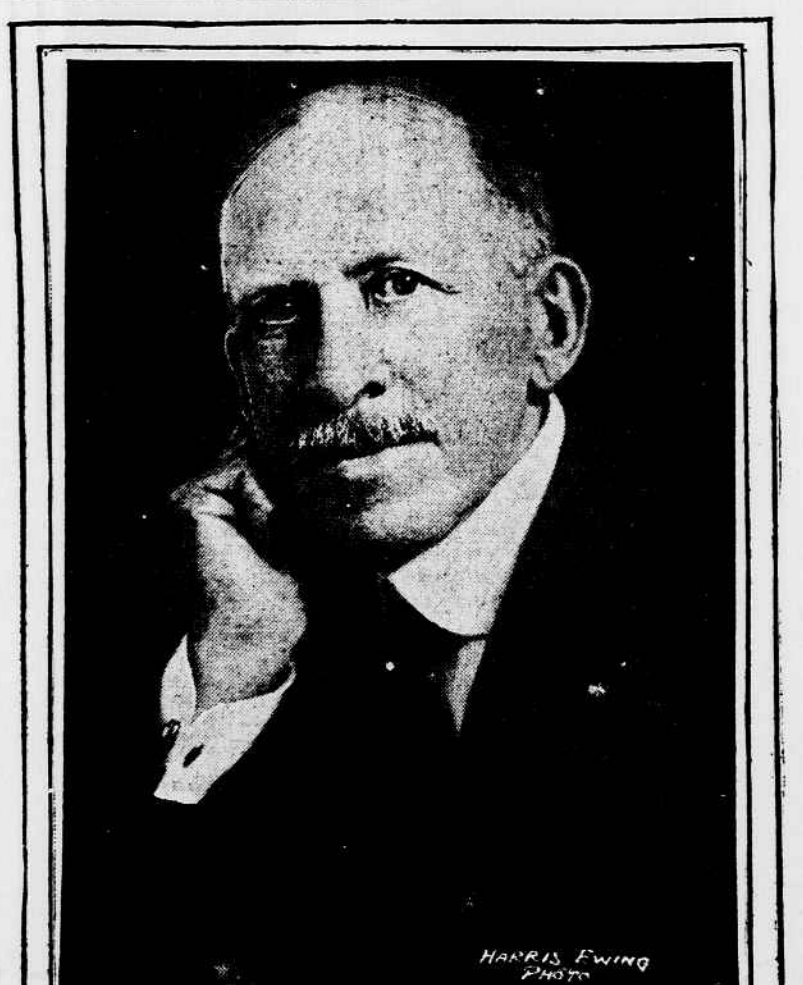
historical division of the National Museum, the collection of objects representing different periods, ready was in existence—in the patent office. In 1883 that collection, largely made up of Washingtoniana, was moved from the patent office to this building. The basis of the Washington collection was purchased by the government in 1878 from the heirs of Mrs. Lawrence Lewis. From time to time, by gift and loan and purchase, the collection has grown. It is now a collection of the life and career of Gen. Washington have now been increased to a total of some 400.

"The collection is a monumental uniform the general were when he resigned his commission as commander-in-chief before Congress at Annapolis, December 23, 1783; the camp chest and mess utensils he used in the field, and articles of domestic and artist interest from Mount Vernon, all of which attract great attention from the visitors to the museum.

"We make no attempt to preserve historic documents here—that is, collections of manuscripts—turning all such as we may acquire over to the Library of Congress, where they properly belong, and where they are accessible to students, but we do retain a few such documents as commissions whose chief value is not primarily documentary. Coins, stamps and medals make up a considerable section in the division.

"Last year there was opened to the public a collection in which the feminine visitors take special interest. In this will be found, with many others, fifteen gowns representing as many presidential administrations, each gown being actually that worn by a mistress of the White House, the first being that worn by Mrs. Martha Washington. Other period costumes make up a collection that gives to the observer an intimate knowledge of the fashions of the different periods.

"The museum, in other words, is designed not only to preserve relics, but to stimulate an interest in history. "Turning now to another aspect of historical work in America, the activities of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution should have a particular interest at this Fourth of July period. Let me quote what are set forth as the purposes and objects of this society: 'They are declared to be patriotic, historical and educational, and shall include those in-



A. HOWARD CLARK.

tended or designed to perpetuate the memory of the men who, by their services or sacrifices during the war of the American revolution, achieved the in-

dependence of the American people; to unite and promote fellowship among their descendants; to inspire them and the community at large with a more

profound reverence for the principles of the government founded by our forefathers; to encourage historical research; to acquire and preserve the records of the individual services of the patriots of the war, as well as documents, relics and landmarks; to mark the scenes of the revolution by appropriate memorials; to celebrate the anniversaries of the prominent events of the war and of the revolutionary period; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, and to carry out the purposes expressed in the preamble of the Constitution of our country and the injunctions of Washington in his farewell address to the American people.

"One of the most wholesome activities of the national society is in the direction of helping the foreign-born residents of the country to a better understanding of American citizenship and of American institutions. The committee on education of aliens is directly in charge of this work. It assisted in bringing about the meeting at Philadelphia, May 10, under the auspices of the municipal government, where 4,000 recently naturalized citizens were addressed by President Wilson, the Secretary of Labor, Mayor Blankenburg and others on the importance of duties assumed through naturalization.

"The society this year is laying particular emphasis on work in this direction. Thus a circular letter from the society's national headquarters has gone out urging members of the organization as patriotic and loyal citizens of our country, to earnestly cooperate with the national Americanization day committee in the movement to make the celebration of Independence day an occasion for welcoming recently naturalized citizens in every city of the land."

"In Washington, Syracuse and other cities particularly noteworthy meetings were addressed by President Wilson, the Secretary of Labor, Mayor Blankenburg and others on the importance of duties assumed through naturalization.

"The society is now printing and distributing annually millions of pamphlets as aids to aliens seeking naturalization or already naturalized. Also we have sent a circular letter on the subject of the importance of the naturalization process to the naturalized alien to understand the Nation's Institutions—The Real Lesson of the Fourth of July.

phlets as aids to aliens seeking naturalization or already naturalized. Also we have sent a circular letter on the subject of the importance of the naturalization process to the naturalized alien to understand the Nation's Institutions—The Real Lesson of the Fourth of July.

"This printing and distribution of the Constitution came about in a curious manner. The secretary of the chapter at New Orleans wrote in relating an incident that had happened in the naturalization court in that city. The judge, seeking to test the knowledge of applicants for naturalization regarding the Constitution, asked the clerk for a copy of that instrument. None was to be found readily. Of course, I suppose, they did not think to look in the court copy of the Revised Statutes. But this gave to the secretary the idea that it might be well to see that prospective applicants for naturalization had ready access to the Constitution, the source of all our institutions, in order that they might be better qualified for citizenship."

"The suggestion was acted upon at once. As a beginning we printed 10,000 copies of the Constitution for free distribution. The success of the plan was instantaneous. The demand for copies was extraordinary, and more than 100,000 copies have been issued. For example, we had more than 100 applications from school children in Brooklyn, most of them evidently from foreign-born children. I recall one little girl who wrote in the naive statement that she needed the Constitution awfully."

"We print special leaflets for foreigners in a dozen different languages, giving in simple terms an explanation of the institutions of this government. Then we have two special leaflets in English explaining the reasons for naturalization."

"There is sound, practical work, helpful to the nation and helpful to the individual. "This regard for the alien seeking naturalization and this desire to help him in acquiring a proper respect for his new citizenship is truly American. It has been truthfully said that 'Americanism is not determined by race or place of birth, but by the spirit that is in a man.'"

"The thirteen colonies were settled by peoples of several tongues, and in 1775 one-fifth of the inhabitants could not read. The Declaration of Independence was signed by men of many different other than Anglo-Saxon descent. These had their share in creating this republic. They were not determined by race or place of birth, but by the spirit that is in a man."

"The thirteen colonies were settled by peoples of several tongues, and in 1775 one-fifth of the inhabitants could not read. The Declaration of Independence was signed by men of many different other than Anglo-Saxon descent. These had their share in creating this republic. They were not determined by race or place of birth, but by the spirit that is in a man."

"Now, to recur to the matter of the preservation of the sources of American history, a condition of amazing neglect and carelessness on the part of the government exists which, through the activities and agitation carried on by the archives committee of the American Historical Association and by the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, has not yet been cured."

"Official records of national and historical value, in this country have been ruthlessly destroyed or lost, while in every other civilized nation they are preserved with the utmost care. On this day you may go into the great departments in Washington and find the records of the revolutionary period, the period of the war of 1812, and of other historic periods, littering up the corridors, or stacked on junk piles. Much that never can be replaced is lost forever; that which remains is in danger of being lost or destroyed."

"As a result of the persistent efforts of those who realize the need, Congress and the Senate have passed a bill to authorize the purchase of a tract of land in Washington on which was to be erected a hall of archives, where the papers of historic value, no longer needed for immediate business, might be preserved and made available for research work. Then an appropriation of \$5,000 was obtained for the preparation of plans for the hall of archives. But before those plans could be completed the land already purchased was seized as a site for a new building for the Department of the Interior, and the work has to be begun all over again. It is useless to prepare plans without foreknowledge of the site, and the site is gone."

"Although state and local patriotic and historical societies, especially in the older states, have been active in the preservation of historic documents, a lack of appreciation of the value of ancient letters and family documents has resulted in the loss of a great amount of material that would throw light on the actual national history as well as on the intimate and domestic life of the people of the earlier periods. These are essential to a thorough understanding of history."

Through the national society and through state societies and local chapters, the Sons of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution, as well as other patriotic societies, there is being carried on a gradual awakening and the creation of a wider interest in our history."

"The Sons of the American Revolution, by awarding medals and other prizes for essays on patriotic subjects, has materially promoted the patriotic education of our youth. Its efforts in the direct work of erecting hundreds of monuments and tablets to commemorate the heroes and events of our history, and to mark the battlefields and other historic sites of the revolutionary period, also have been productive of much good."

"Right now this society, in connection with the Society of the Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, is engaged in the work of accurately locating the graves of the signers of the Declaration of Independence upon a plan for publishing a memorial volume to include a biography of each signer, with details as to his place of burial, to be as fully illustrated as practicable."

"Possibly much of this may appeal to the average workaday, practical man or woman as entirely sentimental. It is sentimental in one aspect, but I trust that in what I have said, the interest in and the broadening of knowledge of American history, the lessons of patriotism, all with the hope of making better our citizenship. And good citizenship, in this land of freedom and equality of opportunity, is the foundation of a government that which makes the country a desirable one in which to live."

ASEMUN BROWN.